



AYA Ceremony Preparation Guidelines

We're grateful for the way these ceremonies have come together. They're possible because of your energy and your intent. So thank you!

You'll find important information contained in this document that will help you to prepare for and participate in ceremony in the best possible fashion. You're welcome to start the process sooner, but please read through this entire document at least one full week prior to attending ceremony with us. Keep in mind that this information is confidential and please don't share it with anyone outside of those attending ceremony with us.

The main purpose of our ceremonies is to develop a deeper and more conscious relationship with the divine spirit, and to look for better and healthier ways to live and relate to yourself, your family, your community, and the planet at-large.

Preparation for Ceremony

Please do your best to adhere to the following guidelines at least one full week prior to ceremony:

In seeking help, guidance, healing, and learning, it is important that you establish a clear intention and purpose for coming into ceremony with us. It's important to be in the best possible disposition for the event; so, please make an effort to stay away from disruptive influences and guilty pleasures (such as indulging in unhealthy food, alcohol, recreational drugs, or too much television or other forms of media) before and after the ceremony.

We recommend lowering your intake of salty, sugary, spicy or greasy food as you prepare for ceremony, but we don't recommend going for more than two days without any salt in your diet. As mentioned, it is recommended to keep some salt in your diet, but we would still advise avoiding heavily-salted foods and snacks. Most foods that are contraindicated with ayahuasca contain an amino acid called *tyramine*. Tyramine, when mixed with ayahuasca, has been linked to migraines and elevated blood pressure — among other things. Tyramine develops in foods as they age. Foods that are aged, preserved, dried, fermented, pickled, cured, rancid, old, outdated, extremely processed, over-ripe, or even slightly spoiled are to be avoided. Taking these steps will allow the body to be in a more receptive and centered state for receiving ayahuasca.

Below you'll find a list of foods to avoid followed by a list of foods you can include in your diet as you prepare for attending ceremony with us:

What Foods Should I Avoid?

- Soy products (soy milk, tofu, fermented bean curd, fermented soybean paste, soy sauce, miso, tempeh, and Bragg's Amino Acids are particularly high in tyramine)
- Red meat and pork products
- Aged, smoked, or canned fish
- Processed meat products (sausage, meat sticks, bologna, pepperoni, salami, corned beef, etc.)
- Aged or hard cheeses
- Fermented foods (vinegar, sauerkraut, kombucha, kimchi, etc.)
- Dairy products that are close to the expiration date or that have been unrefrigerated
- Alcohol of any kind
- Caffeine (minimize or cease completely)
- Preserved fruits (canned or dried fruits such as raisins, prunes, dates, etc.)
- Over-ripe or bruised fruits: especially bananas, apples, and avocados (slightly under-ripe avocados are fine in moderation, but guacamole should be avoided)
- Protein extracts, liquid or powdered protein dietary supplements, protein bars, and protein shakes
- Brewer's yeast, yeast vitamin supplements, or yeast extracts
- Soups made with protein extracts or bouillon (eat fresh soup only)
- Shrimp paste
- Artificial sweeteners, flavoring agents (natural and artificial), and processed foods that contain chemicals and preservatives
- Fava beans (especially if overripe)
- Peanuts
- Chocolate
- Greasy or fried foods
- Rancid oils (canola, vegetable, rapeseed, flax seed etc.)

What Foods Can I Eat?

- Fresh or steamed vegetables
- Fresh fruit (avoid canned, preserved, over-ripe, or bruised fruit)
- Fresh, unpasteurized milk, yogurt, and dairy products (its best to try and avoid large amounts of dairy; but, if you would like to incorporate dairy into your diet, please try to find fresh, unpasteurized dairy products)
- Fresh, soft cheeses (goat cheese, cottage cheese, cream cheese, etc.)
- Whole grains (brown rice, millet, quinoa)
- Beans (in moderation)
- Nuts and seeds (except peanuts)
- Freshwater fish
- Fresh chicken and eggs (organic or pasture-raised options are preferable)

Additional Guidelines for Ceremony Preparation

Consider decreasing time spent engaging with electronic devices, television programming, news stories, digital entertainment, and social media for at least a week prior to and after ceremony.

It is advised to refrain from orgasm for at least one week prior to and three days after ceremony. Preserving sexual energies has been known to create a more beneficial experience for individuals working with ayahuasca.

Antidepressants must be completely out of your system, including St. John's Wort (if you've taken one of the SSRI class of antidepressants within the last eight weeks, you should not sit with ayahuasca). Antihypertensive medications must also be completely out of your system prior to sitting with ayahuasca. Other medications (particularly stimulants, antihistamines, and decongestants) should also be out of your system prior to sitting with ayahuasca (you can click on the following link for a list of supplements and medications which are contraindicated with ayahuasca:

<http://forums.ayahuasca.com/viewtopic.php?f=12&t=14761>).*

Please avoid wearing cologne or perfume the day of, or night prior to, ceremony (this includes artificially scented shampoos, artificially scented soaps, or artificially scented deodorants). One's sense of smell tends to be especially heightened during ceremony.

Please try your best to minimize caffeine consumption (for example: if you drink more than one cup of coffee or any other caffeinated beverage per day, try to cut that down to just one cup in the morning and avoid taking any prescription or over-the-counter medications or supplements that contain caffeine).

Please refrain from using recreational drugs or strong substances for *at least* one week prior to ceremony (alcohol, cannabis, caffeine, cacao, kava kava, etc.). Too much influence from other strong substances can affect your experience in ceremony. Taking into account the essence of this work, and all the people involved, including yourself, please consider refraining from recreational drug use in the recommended period leading up to ceremony. After all, we want everyone to get the most out of ceremony as they can. The emphasis here is to focus on your intention for coming into ceremony.

***Important Note:** Please consult with a physician before discontinuing any prescription medications or altering your medication schedule.

Food Selections, Fasting, and Detoxing Prior to Ceremony

Organic foods are always preferable to non-organic options. The more organic and natural the food is, the more your body will thrive. Eating fresh and healthy foods in this way will aid your body in detoxifying before the ceremony. Easily digestible foods, such as cooked or steamed vegetables, fresh greens, fresh fruits, fresh juices, and healthy grains (such as brown rice, millet, quinoa) are always great options when preparing to sit with ayahuasca.

Gentle detoxification is suggested, but it is not recommended to do intense fasting leading up to ceremony. Try to eat lighter, but don't starve yourself. It is not recommended to fast for days or weeks leading up to ceremony. Some gentle fasting can be supportive, but making sure you have proper nutrients in your system is more important. Organic, leafy greens and water are great tools for detoxifying your system.

If you like, you may drink pau d'arco tea as part of your preparation steps for ceremony. You can buy it in bulk from most health food stores or co-op's. Bulk is recommended over the capsule form. Pau d'arco tinctures are also not recommended (as they may contain alcohol).

Pau D'Arco Tea Recipe*

- Place two thick pinches of pau d'arco in 1 quart of water.
- Bring to a full boil. Let steep for 10 minutes. Strain. Drink hot or cold.
- Drink 3 cups per day with or without meals.
- Cat's claw is another excellent preparatory tea that can simply be added to the pau d'arco. (It's available at most health food stores that sell bulk herbs as well.) To prepare cat's claw and pau d'arco together, keep everything the same as with the pau d'arco tea recipe, just add a couple extra pinches of cat's claw to the pau d'arco.

*Please Note: Drinking this tea is not mandatory but may help to reduce potential reactions like nausea in ceremony. If you do take pau d'arco for the event, we'd advise you to stop drinking it the day prior to sitting in ceremony with us.

Dieting an Amazonian Master Plant

This step is *optional* and is generally recommended for more experienced ceremony participants and plant-medicine practitioners.

In addition to ayahuasca, there are a whole host of other Amazonian plants — typically referred to as *the master plants* or *teacher plants*: these include *ajo sachá*, *bobinsana*, *remo caspi*, and *chullachaqui caspi*—among others. Each plant has specific properties that it is known for and unique ways of being connected with and being taught by — particularly in dreams.

If you'd like to diet one of the master plants before, during, or after your ceremony weekend, we recommend the kits and tinctures sold at AmazonianPlants.com.

Additional Recommendations for Ceremony Preparation

Stay hydrated the week prior to and throughout the ceremony weekend by drinking plenty of water or non-caffeinated tea. The Pau D'arco tea is a diuretic, so you will need to pay extra attention to hydration if you drink it. Consider adding electrolytes, celtic sea salt, or trace minerals to your water for additional hydration benefits as well (and remember that a little can go a long way).

Meditate the week prior. Breath focused meditation is an excellent companion practice, in which you place your attention on your breath until you notice that your attention is not on your breath, then return your attention back to your breath.

Sleep. Catch some extra sleep the night prior or nap the day of ceremony. You'll be awake all night during ceremony. You don't want to struggle with sleep.

Gather your intent: Why are you attending? What do you want to look into? What questions do you have to address?

On the day of ceremony: Some people like to fast on the day of ceremony, but we suggest coming to ceremony feeling nourished and comfortable — especially for folks who are new to ayahuasca. You may eat a good-sized breakfast, a light lunch, and a light dinner. Plan on finishing your dinner around 5:00pm to give your body plenty of time to digest your meal prior to ceremony. You may have a healthy snack sometime in the evening if you happen to feel hungry before ceremony. For the best experience, please come to ceremony on an empty stomach — feeling comfortable and not hungry.

Try to give yourself time after the ceremony to integrate the guidance you receive into the rest of your life and relationships.

Please take good care of your health, nutrition, and immune function in the weeks prior to and after ceremony. Consider consuming buffered Vitamin C and food-based, highly absorbable minerals and vitamins. It is recommended to decrease attendance at large gatherings and big expenditures of energy before or after ceremony. It is ideal to get ample time outdoors — soaking up sunshine and fresh air. Prioritize getting good sleep. Try to engage with people, places, and activities that lift you up, make you feel happy and supported, and centered. For some this may include meditation, yoga, hiking or outdoor activity, making music, listening to music, prayer, reading, creating art, time with family, time with animals, making healthy meals, cleaning up around your living space — decluttering your personal space while also decluttering your body and your mind.

What Should I Bring to Ceremony with Me?

You will be sitting or lying down, as needed, for much of the ceremony, so please bring everything you will need to be comfortable, including: a sleeping mat or pad, sleeping bag, a pillow, and blankets. If you would like to sit up during ceremony, you may bring a low back-jack chair. Sleeping mats should be the width of typical camping pads — unless you plan to have your mat accommodate two people. Please bring an extra change of clothes with you too. As a reminder, we'll email you our packing recommendations prior to ceremony as well.

When Should I Arrive for Ceremony?

Please aim to arrive for ceremony between 6:00pm and 7:00pm. We'll email you driving directions prior to ceremony as well.

A Note on Integration

Try to give yourself time after the ceremony to integrate your ceremony experience. If you can, don't rush back to work; and, if possible, spend some time in nature to reflect on your experience. Please note that you are always welcome to contact us at AYA via a phone call, text message, or email if you'd like additional support after ceremony or simply want to talk and further process your ceremony experience. And, if you're on Facebook, please join our [AZAyaGuide Facebook Group](#) to read about others' experiences and share your own. We encourage anyone blessed with having participated in ceremony to post on our Facebook page. It's a great way to memorialize your experience and support others in their journey. In short, it can feel good to share.

Thank You for Your Interest in Attending Ceremony with AYA

We're honored to share the sacred space of our ceremonies with you. Please email us at ceremony@aya.guide or give us a call at (520) 777-1348 if you have any additional questions as you are preparing to come into ceremony with us.



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